

Members

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Sen. Patricia Miller
Sen. Allie Craycraft
Sen. Earline Rogers
Dr. Walter J. Daly
Greg Wilson, M.D.
Beverly Richards
Michael Urban, M.D.
Beth Compton



COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH CARE

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: October 2, 2003
Meeting Time: 1:00 P.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington
St., the House Chambers
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 4

Members Present: Rep. Charlie Brown, Chairperson; Rep. Vaneta Becker; Rep. Timothy Brown; Sen. Gary Dillon; Sen. Patricia Miller; Sen. Allie Craycraft; Sen. Earline Rogers; Dr. Walter J. Daly; Michael Urban, M.D.

Members Absent: Rep. Peggy Welch; Greg Wilson, M.D.; Beverly Richards; Beth Compton.

Representative Charlie Brown called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. and began to receive testimony on the subject of childhood obesity and school nutrition.

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

Judy Chin, D.D.S., Pediatric Dentist, Indiana University School of Dentistry

Dr. Chin explained that whenever she has a patient who has multiple tooth decay she will ask questions to determine the cause. Many children are drinking sodas at home and school. Dr. Chin distributed photos of a recent 11 year old patient who suffered damage because of excessive soda consumption at school and home. (Exhibit #1) The patient had to have 23 appointments to fix the damage and all the work will have to be redone when the patient becomes an adult. Dr. Chin offered the following recommendations:

- Keep sodas completely out of the elementary grades.
- Turn off soda vending machines at the middle and high schools during the school day.
- Place healthy items in the vending machines.

In reply to Commission questions, Dr. Chin stated the following:

- She has observed that about half the children that come to her for care are overweight. Many of these patients are provided medical assistance through Medicaid and Hoosier Health Wise.
- Many schools allow students to drink soda during class - even in elementary schools.

Peggy Huffman, Parent

Ms. Huffman told of the experiences she and her 12 year old son have had with the school lunch program. The school where her son was enrolled began offering a charge card type system that allowed children to select their own foods. Choices included items like corn dogs, bread and cheese, and sodas. Her son put on much weight and developed cardiovascular risk factors. They have had to stop participation in the lunches offered by the school, because of all the bad choices, and have started packing their own lunch. As a result her son has begun to lose weight.

Paul Mannweiler, Bose Treacy Associates representing the Indiana Soft Drink Association

Mr. Mannweiler indicated that he was in agreement with the information provided by the Indiana Department of Education, the Indiana State Department of Health, and others at the Commission meeting on September 30, 2003. Mr. Mannweiler distributed to Commission members a copy of an interactive CD entitled "Soft Drinks and Healthy Lifestyles" (Exhibit #2) and other materials concerning obesity. (Exhibit #3). Other points that were presented included the following:

- The amount of time spent watching television has a stronger link to obesity than food.
- A food by itself is not bad but there are bad diets.
- Federal policy states that soft drink machines cannot be in an elementary school if the school is receiving federal lunch money. This restriction would not apply to private schools.
- Some schools like North Central High School in Indianapolis do not allow soft drinks to be available during the school day.

Senator Miller stated that in a recent presentation to the Health Finance Committee

Anthem indicated that to keep future premiums down people would have to lose weight, exercise more, and reduce smoking.

Danielle Del Carlo, Midwest Counsel, National Automatic Merchandising Association

Ms. Del Carlo distributed information concerning a recent school vending machine survey and a fact sheet on vending machine foods. (Exhibit #4) Her presentation included the following information:

- Balance, variety, and moderation are the key for a healthy diet.
- Vending machines are capable of distributing an assortment of products including, candy, soda, water and fruit.
- The average child vends less than one candy bar per week.
- Vending machines provide options where other food services might not be available.
- Money from vending machines is used for a variety of school programs.
- Children need to be educated on proper choices.
- Children need to get more exercise and should participate in programs like the President's Health and Fitness Initiative.
- It is okay to shut down vending machines at certain times. However, the machines should not be totally banned and certain products should not be prohibited.

Nancy J. Perry, Vice President, Krodel Vending; Indiana Vending Council

Ms. Perry stated that she provides vending machines to several schools. Each school determines when the machine will be available and what products will be used. At the schools she serves the vending machines have timers and do not operate until after 3:00 p.m. Money from the vending machines goes to various school programs and clubs.

Jerry Poehler, Owner/Operator, Avon Vending

Mr. Poehler stated that he operates in three schools in his area. His machines offer about a 50% mix of healthy choices, though non-healthy items are consumed at a faster rate. He believes that children need to learn to make correct choices and get more exercise.

Douglas Morrell, M.D., School Board Member, Rush County

Dr. Morrell stated that everyone knows junk food is bad for kids but in some areas, like seatbelts and tobacco, nothing will change until legislation is enacted. Dr. Morrell made the following points:

- School boards do not want to restrict vending machines because of the money they generate. In Rush County the machines do not contain any healthy items.
- Schools should be required to remove junk food and incorporate the Coordinated School Health Program (CSHP). Most of the components of the program require little or no funding.
- The McComb School District in Mississippi had the following results three years after implementing CSHP:

- School suspensions down 84%.
- Out of school detention down 95%.
- Alternative school students down 50%.
- Special education students down 27%.
- Second grade reading bench mark rose from 11% to 85%.
- Graduation rate rose from 77% to 81%.
- ACT scores improved 9%.

Mike O'Brian, Legislative Liaison, Indiana State Medical Association

Mr. O'Brian stated that lack of exercise and an unhealthy diet creates unhealthy patients. Unhealthy patients raise the cost of healthcare. Mr. O'Brian noted from his personal experience that the high school he attended had vending machines located just outside the dining hall. He also stated that Illinois required students to take more PE than Indiana does. He recommended that Indiana start addressing the problems of obesity and nutrition by requiring more PE and healthier diets for students.

Tamara Hannon, M.D., Professor, Indiana University School of Medicine

Dr. Hannon stated that obesity is the number one problem in U.S. health. Too many meals have excessive calories. 36% of Indiana's 3rd graders are overweight. Dr. Hannon related a recent exam of a 2 year old who weighed 60 pounds, which is the normal weight of a 9 year old. Health problems that used to be confined to adults are now being seen in children. Nationally it was estimated that in 2000 the added cost due to problems related to obesity was \$117 billion. Drinking one can of pop per day, in excess of a normal diet, leads to a yearly weight gain of about 15 pounds. Poor nutrition coupled with the amount of time the average child watches television leads to weight gain. Dr. Hannon concluded by asking that vending machines be removed from schools and that schools be required to offer more PE.

Patricia Richards, American Cancer Society

Ms. Richards stated that poor nutrition, obesity, and lack of exercise lead to increased cancer deaths. Most Americans, including children, are becoming overweight and obese. She concluded by stating that healthy habits need to be learned in school and should be the only choice.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.